

From: Steve Carr
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/26/02 3:16pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement.

Please resolve this suit against Microsoft quickly and fairly. Due to Microsoft's success and competitive nature, companies who have less superior products and no marketing power are upset and trying to make their fortunes via unfair lawsuits. Local governments that support these companies are of course supporting them (it's their duty) and looking for a piece of the pie.

The browser integration into Windows was not illegal and has not hurt consumers. It's required functionality for today's technology level just as Terminal programs were in the past. In the past when modem dialup was becoming popular, people were required to download modem connection programs from a dialup BBS. Since the OS didn't initially supply this functionality, consumers were left in a frustrating catch-22 situation. They needed dialup access to download a terminal program, but since they didn't have a terminal program, they didn't have dial-up access to do so. Microsoft integrated a terminal program that was good enough for some, while others used it to download their application of choice. If there was not a web browser included with Windows, we'd be in the same position. It's a required feature for today's online access. Users are still free to download other browser software if they choose to do so. There is choice.

The browser functionality was further integrated into the operating system, not to kill off competitors but to gain functionality. Why develop several technologies when one could be used for multiple purposes. Browser software is after all just a language interpreter. It was initially required to support HTML used by web servers. The language became more powerful over time and became used for more than just web server interpretation. Help files for the OS and other applications for example could now be created in HTML instead of using proprietary help file formats. The OS needs functionality built in to read these help files. Non-OS help files (applications) could only be distributed if each application was bundled with interpretation software (browser) unless it could assume that an interpreter was already installed on the computer. For this to be guaranteed, it has to be built in. Browser technology has moved beyond even web server and help file interpretation. Now it's used to browse files and folders on the computer as well. That's a good thing. People can customize how different directories look and have more information available than a flat file list. Again, good for the consumer.

There are other points brought up such as price breaks to OEMs for bulk deals or contracts requiring exclusive application placement to get price cuts. Is that illegal? Not to my knowledge. Many businesses do this. If you buy a product in bulk at the grocery store, it's cheaper. Buy two, get one free. Coupons supplied in the newspaper each Sunday advertise purchase these two products from a company and get a discount on this other product. It's done all the time, it always has been, and it's not illegal.

I'm sorry to babble here, I'm just frustrated that so much time and money is continually wasted to satisfy people that cry foul when they fail at something. I spilled coffee, I'm going to sue. I can't control myself, punish everyone else and make this illegal. My business didn't pan out because someone wrote better software than me, I'm going to sue. Put a rest to this garbage and stop punishing a company for their success. If you feel you need to protect others from individual success, then propose and create new laws based on the voters opinion; but please don't destroy a company to satisfy sore losers.

These personal opinions are my own and should be treated as such.

Sincerely,

Steve Carr